GOD'S GREAT STORY

CROSSROADS
PRISON MINISTRIES

ANSWER KEY

Cover artwork by Gilberto M., Crossroads student

CROSSROADS
PRISON MINISTRIES

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible is a big book. It is well over 1,000 pages in most editions. But this very big book is God's Word given to you. In the Bible, God has given you a great story that goes from creation to salvation to the restoration of the world. But sometimes it can be difficult to see exactly how all the major pieces of the Bible fit together. It can also be hard to see our own places in God's story. The purpose of this course is to help you do just that. Our aim is to help you to navigate your Bible better. Throughout the Bible, God is working to build His Kingdom. All the books of the Bible together tell a unified story of His creation and His plan through His Son to establish His Kingdom.

STUDY TOOLS

Throughout this course, students will be provided the tools listed below to assist them in their studies. These tools provide ways that you can interact with students.

CONVERSATION BOXES: We have included some spaces throughout the lessons that we call **conversation boxes**. Students can use these boxes to write questions and thoughts they have about the lesson or about life. You can also respond to a student in any space that the student has not filled.

ACTION STEPS: At the end of each lesson, we have included a challenge called an **action step**. It asks the student to apply what they have learned. If they feel that they need help or encouragement to complete it, they may simply write down what they plan to do. You can follow up with the student by asking if they have completed it.

Glossary of Terms

Each lesson contains Bible names, terms, and ideas that may be new to students. We will do our best to provide definitions that are easy to understand. The list below includes all of the terms found in this course. In each lesson, we have included an asterisk (*****) the first time each term appears.

Abram – A central figure in the Biblical story, Abram is promised a multitude of children. His name is later changed to Abraham and he becomes the father of the children of Israel.

Ark of the Covenant — A storage chest made of wood with a solid gold decorated lid in which the Hebrew people kept the stone tablets of the Law, Aaron's rod, and a pot of manna, the food God provided to the Hebrew people in the desert.

Baal — The supreme god of the Canaanite and Phoenician nations.

Babylonians — A group of people who established a far-reaching, powerful empire in the ancient world. Also known as the Amorites. Around 600 BC, the Babylonians defeated Judah and took many Jews as prisoners.

Blasphemy — The act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God.

Centurion — A Roman military officer.

Covenant — A solemn agreement between two parties in which a promise is made to fulfill the obligations of the agreement. Frequently, blessings were pronounced upon obedience to the covenant and curses upon disobedience.

Descendant – One's offspring, either naturally or through adoption.

Eden — The place on the earth that God created and placed Adam and Eve. More broadly, it refers to God's perfect plan for humanity to live in His perfect presence and blessing.

Enmity — The state or feeling of being actively opposed or hostile to someone or something.

Exile — To be sent away or forced to leave your country, usually by force by a ruler.

Exodus – The event in which God rescued His people from slavery in Egypt and led them through the wilderness to the Promised Land. This mass departure, led by Moses, is recorded in the second book of the Bible, Exodus, which tells the story of God's deliverance and His covenant with His people.

Feast of Pentecost — A Jewish celebration instituted by God to be celebrated 50 days after Passover. Christians celebrate Pentecost as the day that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to empower His disciples after He went back to heaven.

Flogged — To beat with a stick or whip as a means of punishment or torture.

Genealogy – A written record of family members. Sometimes referred to as a family tree.

gods — Idols that were worshipped as gods in place of the true God, Yahweh.

Great Commission — Jesus' instruction to His followers to continue His work of making disciples.

Holy Spirit — One of the three persons of the Trinity. The Trinity is made up of three distinct persons, God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit.

Idol — In ancient Israel and Judah, idols were false gods that were worshipped in place of Yahweh. Today, an idol can be anything that we place above God in importance.

Idol Worshiper – A person who worships gods of their own making.

Incarnation — The embodiment of God the Son in human flesh as Jesus Christ.

Israel — Originally the twelve tribes of God's chosen people. When the kingdom was divided, the ten tribes in the area to the north of Jerusalem became known as Israel.

Judah — Descendants of Jacob. In Jewish history, the tribe of Judah inhabited the region in the south of the promised land, along with the tribe of Benjamin.

Ketuvim — Means "Writings." The third of three sections of the Old Testament. It includes poems, scrolls, and other books not included in the Torah or Nivi'im.

Legacy — The long-lasting impact of events and actions of someone's life.

Logos — The Greek word translated in the Bible as "Word." The Greeks understood the logos to be the intelligent force behind the universe. John tells us that the Word is Jesus.

Lord's Supper — The celebration in the early church of remembering Jesus' body that was broken and blood that was shed on the Cross.

Martyr — Someone who is put to death or suffers because of their faith.

Nivi'im — The second of three sections of the Old Testament. It is commonly divided into "Former" and "Latter" Prophets.

Passover — The miracle God did to save the Jews in Egypt as He cursed the Egyptian firstborn sons and cattle with death. The Passover became a remembrance celebration that God ordered His people to honor each year. Ultimately, Jesus was the final Passover Lamb who fully took away the sin of mankind.

Persians — People of an ancient kingdom located in modern-day Iran. Under their king, Cyrus, the Persians defeated the Babylonians (see "**Babylonians**") and allowed the Jews to return to the Promised Land.

Pharoah — Kings that ruled over ancient Egypt.

Plague — An unpleasant event like disease, an infestation of tormenting insects, or crime.

Promised Land — The land that God promised to Abraham that He would give to His people. It would be many generations before Joshua actually brought the Hebrew people into this region to make their permanent homes.

Redemption — The action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil.

Synagogue — Building or place where a Jewish assembly or congregation meets for religious worship and instruction.

Synoptic Gospels — The first three Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They follow a similar sequence of events in Jesus' life. A general summary or "synopsis."

TaNaK — Or T.N.K. T=Torah N=Nivi'im K= Ketuvim

Theophilos — The person to whom Luke addressed his Gospel and the Book of Acts. Theophilus is believed to be a wealthy supporter of the ministry of the Apostles.

Torah — The first five books of the Old Testament. It is sometimes also referred to as the Pentateuch (five) or Books of the Law.

Word — The way John identifies Jesus in the first chapter of his Gospel (see "**Logos**").

LESSON 1: The Kingdom of God

1. Read **2 Timothy 3:15**. What do you think Paul meant when he wrote that the Scriptures are "God-breathed"?

   Paul was reminding Timothy that Scripture can be trusted as coming from God, not from the thoughts of men. God communicated His thoughts to the writers who were faithful to record all that God had spoken through His Spirit.

2. Read **Hebrews 1:1-2**. According to the writer of Hebrews, what role did the prophets play in God's Kingdom prior to Jesus?

   God spoke to His people through His prophets.

3. How would you describe your Bible knowledge? Check one:

   _____ Expert: many years of Bible study
   _____ Knowledgeable
   _____ About average for most Christians
   _____ Have read and understand some of the Bible
   _____ Not very familiar with the Bible

   The student's answer provides the mentor with an assessment of the student's knowledge of the Bible to help the mentor provide feedback relative to the student's prior learning.

4. From what you have previously learned about God's Kingdom on Earth in the Garden of Eden before sin entered the world, how would you describe this paradise?

   Sin had not entered into the creation. Adam and Eve talked with God and enjoyed a life that God had designed for them. It was perfect.

5. Read **Genesis 6:5-21**: How did God react to the wickedness of humans in this section of Genesis?

   Because humans were so evil, God regretted that He had created them. God's heart was deeply troubled by their wickedness. God wiped humanity off the earth, except for Noah and his family.

6. If you were Abraham, wealthy and respected by those who knew you, how would you feel if God asked you to leave everything you knew and had come to rely on?

   Possible answers include: angry, afraid, confused, excited. There is not a wrong answer.

7. If you are a Christian, in what ways was your experience similar to Abraham's when God called you to follow His Son Jesus?

   The student might answer that they were afraid or unsure of what their life would be like if they followed Jesus. They could also say that they were ready to be forgiven of their sins and had no hesitation about following Jesus.

8. If you are not a Christian, is it because you don't believe or is because you think the price to follow God is too high? Explain:

   Students will most commonly say that they are a Christian already. If they are not, use the student's answer to provide encouragement and support about how the cost of following God pales in comparison to the alternative.

9. When was a time that you felt that God was slow to give you His promises for your life?

   The student's answer should provide the mentor with an opportunity to share from their own experience how God doesn't work on our timeline but is always perfect in His timing.

Read **1 Chronicles 22:5-10** and answer the following questions:

10. While King David made plans to build a temple for the nation of Israel, David had to pass the project on to his son, Solomon. What did God tell David about his building of the temple? (1 Chronicles 22:8)

    God told David that David would not build the Temple because he was a man of war who had shed much blood. This disqualified David from the task.

11. What did God tell David about his son Solomon? (1 Chronicles 22:9)

    "But you will have a son who will be a man of peace and rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon, and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign."

12. What was God's plan for His Kingdom and His people?

The student's answer should reflect God's words to David through Samuel.

"The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever."

Read **Luke 4:14-30** and answer the following question:

13. Why did those who heard Jesus speak in the synagogue become angry with Jesus?

Because Jesus was telling them that because of their rejection of God in the time of Elijah, God did not answer to the needs of those in Israel. Jesus was critical of their lack of faith.

14. Where do you see your own place in God's story?

There is not a correct answer to this question. The student may have a strong sense of where they fit in God's story, or they may not. The student's answer provides the mentor with some insight into the student's experience with God. Encourage, support, or provide a different perspective if needed.

Action Step

Spend time considering how you fit into God's Great Story. What do you need to do to continue the ministry of Jesus today? Decide on one thing you can do today to fulfill what you have been called to do in the Kingdom. It may be sharing the Gospel, sharing the love of God, or being reconciled with someone with whom you have a broken relationship. Write down what you will do, pray that God will help you, and follow through to action.

My Notes

LESSON 2: The Fallen Kingdom

1. Read **Genesis 1** and match each creation with the day it happened.

B	Day 1	a. God created the creatures of the sea and birds.
E	Day 2	b. God created light and darkness—day and night.
F	Day 3	c. God created land animals, and He created humans in His own image.
D	Day 4	d. God created the sun, moon, and stars.
A	Day 5	e. God created the water and the sky.
C	Day 6	f. God created dry ground and vegetation.

2. Read **Genesis 1:26–30**. What do you think it means to "rule over" God's creation? What else did God command Adam and Eve to do?

   God told humans to steward and be responsible for managing and taking care of creation. Humans were created superior to animals. God also told humans to be fruitful and multiply.

Read **Romans 5:12–21**.

3. What did Paul say happened to all people because of the sin of Adam (verse 12)?

   Sin and death became part of the human experience.

4. Adam was a pattern for whom, according to Paul (verse 14)?

   The one to come / Jesus

5. Although we all experience death because of Adam, what can we experience through Jesus (verse 17)?

   Grace, God's righteousness, life

Read **1 Corinthians 15:42–49**.

6. The first Adam became a living being. What did the last Adam, Jesus, become (verse 45)?

   A life-giving Spirit

7. The first man, Adam, came from dust. What did the second man, Jesus, come from (verse 47)?

   Heaven

Read **Genesis 6:1–8**.

8. What was an additional consequence for humanity's wickedness that God pronounced in verse 3?

   A limited lifespan of 120 years

9. Why was God so deeply troubled (verse 5)?

   The wickedness of mankind

10. Why did God choose Noah to carry on His promise?

    Because Noah had found favor in the eyes of the Lord

11. God's promise depended on one man: Noah. What does this teach you about God?

    The student might answer that it teaches us that God did not entirely give up on man or that one person can make a great difference through their life.

Read **Genesis 9:1–17**.

12. Where in this passage do you see similar promises and commands to those God gave to Adam and Eve?

    Like Adam and Eve, Noah had God's blessing and command to be fruitful and multiply to populate the earth. God gave Noah and his descendants authority to manage and rule over all living animals. God affirmed to Noah that humans are made in His image. Like Adam and Eve, God gave Noah a specific command of what not to eat. While Adam and Eve were commanded not to eat fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Noah was told not to eat meat of an animal that had been strangled and still contained the animal's blood.

13. Why did God give Noah the sign of a rainbow?

    The rainbow was a sign of a covenant, or promise, that God made that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood.

Read **Genesis 11:1–9**.

14. When God saw what the people who settled on the plain of Shinar were doing, what did He say?

    But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." (Genesis 11:5-7)

15. After confusing their language, what did God do to the people?

    God scattered them around the earth.

16. According to Acts 17:26–28, why did God separate the people into nations?

    From one man He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth.

17. Read **Genesis 12:1–3**. Why is Abram so important that the Bible talks about him so much?

    The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.
    "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you;
    I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.
    I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse;
    and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

18. God acts according to His time and His purposes. What was an instance in your life when God acted in His time rather than your own?

    The student is asked to reflect on their life experience and identify God's intervention and activity in their life despite their own decisions and efforts.

Action Step

List three ways that you are experiencing the blessing of living under God's rule right now.

LESSON 3: The Kingdom of Promise

1. Read **Genesis 17:3–8**. Which of the following did God promise to Abram? Mark all that apply:

   ___**X**___ Make him into a great nation
   _____ Give him a life free from trouble
   ___**X**___ Bless him and be his God
   ___**X**___ Give him land for his people

Read **Romans 4:20–25**.

2. What did Paul say Abraham (Abram) was fully persuaded of?

   God had the power to do what He had promised.

3. Paul wrote that Abraham was credited with righteousness. Who else would be credited with the same righteousness?

   The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

4. Like Sarah, we sometimes try to solve our own problems rather than waiting for God to do His will. Describe a time when you tried to fix a problem yourself rather than wait for God's answer to your problem.

   The student is being asked to identify a time in their life when they tried to fix a problem using their own strength and understanding that they now understand was not successful or had unintended consequences.

5. Think back to a time when you were in desperate circumstances, and it seemed like God was not going to answer your prayers. How did this impact your faith?

   The student may say that their faith was challenged or that they were tempted to take matters into their own hands.

6. Read **Genesis 18:11–12**. What was Sarah's reaction to the conversation she overheard?

   She laughed to herself because she lacked faith that, at her old age, she would become pregnant.

Read **Genesis 22:1–19**.

7. If you were Abraham, what would you have thought and felt when you heard God speak the words in verse 12?

   Possible student responses could be, but are not limited to:

   Relief, confusion, gratefulness

8. What did Abraham name the mountain where God called him to sacrifice Isaac?

   The Lord Will Provide

Read **Genesis 39:1–23**.

9. How did Joseph respond to Potiphar's wife when she tempted him?

   At first Joseph refused Potiphar's wife's advances. When she persisted, he ran out of the house.

10. Whom did Joseph say he would be sinning against if he did what Potiphar's wife wanted him to do?

    God (Genesis 39:9)

11. Why was Joseph so successful in everything that he did?

    When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did (Genesis 39:3)

12. Read **Genesis 45:6–8** and **50:18–20**. Why did Joseph say he was sent to Egypt?

    But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. (Genesis 45:7)

    You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. (Genesis 50:20)

Action Step

God blessed many people through Joseph, even people who didn't know God. Think of two people in your life whom God could bless through you. Ask God to show you ways you could bless them and then write down what you did.

My Notes

LESSON 4: Kingdom Beginnings

1. What has God done for you that you often forget about?

   When life gets difficult, and sometimes when life is going well for us, we forget all that God has done. This question challenges the student to recall all that God has done in their life. Encourage your student to write some of these things down and review them from time to time to cultivate an attitude of gratitude.

Read **Exodus 2:23-25**.

2. What did God hear that caused Him to act (verse 23)?

   The Israelites groaning and calling out to God because of their difficult lives as slaves.

3. What did God remember that caused Him to act (verse 24)?

   God remembered the covenant (promise) He had made with Abraham and Isaac.

4. Read Moses' responses to God in Exodus 3:11, 3:13, 4:1, 4:10, and 4:13 and match the verse with the response.

   A. 3:11 ___**E**___ "Please send someone else."
   B. 3:13 ___**D**___ "I am slow of speech."
   C. 4:1 ___**C**___ "What if they won't believe me?"
   D. 4:10 ___**B**___ "What if they ask me Your name?"
   E. 4:13 ___**A**___ "Who am I?"

5. What is your most common response to God when you believe He is asking you to do something difficult? Can you relate to any of Moses' responses? If so, which ones?

   The student is being asked how they respond when what they believe God is requiring of them seems too difficult. The student's response will give their mentor insight into their insecurities, fears, or lack of faith.

6. Using the chapter and verses given from Exodus, list the ten plagues.

   Ex. 7:17 ___**The Nile River was changed to blood**___ plague

Ex. 8:5	**Frog infestation**	plague
Ex. 8:16-17	**Gnats**	plague
Ex. 8:20-22	**Flies**	plague
Ex. 9:1-4	**Disease to livestock**	plague
Ex. 9:8-9	**Boils on people and animals**	plague
Ex. 9:22-23	**Hail**	plague
Ex. 10:4-5	**Locusts**	plague
Ex. 10:21-22	**Darkness**	plague
Ex. 11:4-7	**Death of firstborn sons**	plague

7. Open your Bible to Exodus Chapter 20 and place the appropriate number in front of each commandment in the order that they are given to Moses:

   6 You shall not murder
   4 Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy
   9 You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor
   10 Do not covet your neighbor's house, wife, or property
   2 Do not make an image (statue) of God or worship idols
   3 Do not misuse the name of the Lord
   1 You shall have no other gods before Me
   7 You shall not commit adultery
   8 You shall not steal
   5 Honor you father and mother

8. What does it say to you about God, that even though angry, He agreed not to destroy those that worshipped the golden calf after Moses pleaded with Him? (Exodus 32)

   The student may answer one or more of the following:

   - **God hears us. Moses pleaded on behalf of the people and God listened.**
   - **The Egyptians would think God was evil and delivered His people to destroy them.**
   - **God keeps His promises. He made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Israel.**

9. Briefly write about a time where God was leading you and taking care of you, but you didn't realize it at the time.

   The student is being asked to consider how God worked in their life in the past, but they could not see or understand it at the time. The student should give an example.

10. What miracle did God do that allowed the Hebrew army to enter Jericho and defeat that nation? (Joshua 6:20-21)

    He collapsed the walls of the city of Jericho.

11. What did Achan do that went against the orders God gave to Joshua?

    He stole some of the treasure that was taken from Jerico that was supposed to be dedicated to God.

Read **Judges 2:8-23** and answer the following questions:

12. How old was Joshua when he died? (Judges 2:8)

    110 years old

13. After Joshua's death, Israel did this: (Judges 2:11-12)

    They began worshipping idols / Baal.

14. When one of the Israelite judges would die, the people did the following: (Judges 2:18-19)

    They returned to their corrupt ways.

15. What did Saul do to disqualify him from being Israel's king? (1 Samuel 15:17-19)

    He disobeyed God. He stole the plunder (valuables) that were taken in battle.

Read **1 Samuel 16:1-13** and answer the following questions:

16. Samuel, seeing Jesse's son Eliab, thought that he looked most suitable to be God's choice for a king. But God tells Samuel what? (1 Samuel 16:6-7)

    That He rejected Eliab as the next king. While people see the outward things of men, God sees the hearts of men.

17. What does God tell Samuel after Jesse's youngest son, David, is brought to them? (1 Samuel 16:12)

    Rise and anoint him. He was the one chosen to be king.

Read **2 Samuel 12:1-24** and answer the following:

18. What did Nathan say the rich man stole from the poor man? (2 Samuel 12:1-4)

    His one lamb. His most valuable possession.

19. What is David's response to Nathan? (2 Samuel 12:5-6)

    The rich man should die and pay four times the value of the lamb that was stolen from the poor man.

20. Which of David's sons did God call to build His temple? (1 Chronicles 22:6-10)

    Solomon

21. Why did God say David would not be the one to build His temple? (1 Chronicles 22:6-10)

    God told David that he would not build the Temple because he was a man of war who had shed much blood on the earth.

Action Step

This week, seek out other Christians at your facility to talk about how God has worked in their lives even when they were not aware that it was Him orchestrating events. Encourage each other with your testimonies of God's mercy and grace.

My Notes

LESSON 5: The Kingdom to Come

1. If God told you He would grant whatever you asked, what would you ask for?

   Solomon could have anything he asked for. He asked for wisdom. The student is asked to reflect on their own heart and the desires of the heart. There is no right or wrong answer. Affirm the student or offer a Biblical perspective.

2. Complete the following verse from 1 Kings 12:24:

   "This is what the Lord says: Do not **go up and fight against your brothers**, the Israelites."

Read the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18:20-40 and answer the following questions:

3. What was the name of the mountain where Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal? (1 Kings 18:20)

   Mount Carmel

4. Elijah told the 450 prophets of Baal to call on their god and he would call on his God. The true God would answer how? (1 Kings 18:24)

   "The god who answers by fire–he is God."

5. What did Jeremiah accuse the people of Judah of in Jeremiah 25:3?

   Not listening to the warnings he told them from God.

6. Jeremiah had told the people that God would not harm them if they did what? (Jeremiah 25:6)

   "Do not follow other gods."

7. Because the people did not listen to repeated warnings from Jeremiah, God told them He was going to do what? (Jeremiah 25:8-11) List all of the consequences listed in these verses.

   - **Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: "Because you have not listened to my words, I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant**

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," declares the LORD, "and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations.

- **I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin.**
- **I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp.**
- **This whole country will become a desolate wasteland,**
- **and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years."**

8. In your past, what are some of the idols that you have allowed in your life?

   Idols are those things in our lives that we go to before God for pleasure, relief, or greed. The student is asked to identify some of those things in their own life either now or prior to coming to faith in Jesus.

9. Think about the particular idol that was most destructive to you. What was it about that idol that gave you relief from the difficulties of life?

   Our idols provide us with a false sense of security or satisfaction. The student is asked to reflect on why their idols brough them some temporary relief from their difficulties in life.

10. Some men and women in prison decline parole and choose to "max out" or "jam" their sentence. How is that similar to what the Jewish people who chose to stay in Persia did when they were offered freedom?

    It can feel safer to be in an environment that we have become comfortable in rather than move to an environment that we are unsure of. In prison it may be easier to do all of our sentence rather than paroling out and have to be supervised by a parole officer.

11. In your own words, what did the people do when they were released to go back to their homeland? (Haggai 1:2-4)

    The people made their own comfort and luxury a priority over God and restoring their religion and Temple.

12. As a result of their actions, what were the results they were experiencing? (Haggai 1:5-6)

    The student's answer should reflect an understanding of the following section of Haggai.

"Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the LORD. "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house. Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops."

13. What does God tell the people to do to reverse the course they were on? (Haggai 1:8)

    Build His house, the Temple that had been destroyed. Rebuilding the Temple first and restoring the worship of God should have been their priority.

Read **Matthew 6:25-34** and answer the following questions:

14. In Matthew 6:25, Jesus said not to worry about what?

    "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear."

15. What does Jesus say in Matthew 6:33?

    "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

16. Has there ever been a time when you felt like God said, "Wait"?

    The student is being asked to reflect on their experience of wanting something, even something good, and understanding that it is important to wait for God's timing.

17. How are you trying to submit to God's timing rather than your own timing?

    The student may give a specific example of something, maybe getting out of prison, but understanding that God has a purpose for even the difficult things we are going through.

Action Step

1 Peter 5:6-7 says, *"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."* Write down two or three things you can do to grow in humility like Jesus. Practice those things for at least a week, then write down how the experience went for you.

My Notes

LESSON 6: The Kingdom Arrives

1. Complete the following verses: (Galatians 4:3-7)

   *So also, when we were underage, we were in slavery under the **spiritual forces of the world**. But when the set time had fully come, **God sent his Son**, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive **adoption** to sonship. Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into **our hearts**, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but God's **child**; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.*

2. Complete the following verse from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah written more than 700 years before Jesus' birth:

   *Therefore the Lord himself will **give you** a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to **a son**, and will call him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)*

3. If someone were to ask you what the good news of God was, how would you respond?

   The student's answer should include something about our sins being forgiven through Jesus, new life in Christ, or God making a way for us to be in relationship with Him.

4. Complete the following verses from Luke 1:1-4:

   *Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were **eyewitnesses and servants of the word**. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully **investigated** everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus*, so that you may know **the certainty** of the things you have been taught.*

5. What is the Bible verse or Bible story that has been most important for you in understanding who God is? How did that verse or story impact your life?

   The student is challenged to reflect on how the Bible has impacted and informed their life. Affirm the student's reflection or share a specific verse that has impacted your own life.

6. Why do you think it is difficult for some people to understand that it is not our good behavior or following rules (the Law) that makes us righteous?

   The student may answer something along the lines of:

   - **Being good seems like it would please God.**
   - **Grace does not seem fair.**
   - **Satan tries to convince us that God cannot forgive us.**
   - **I have a lot of guilt about my past.**

7. Complete the following verses from Colossians 1:15-20:

   *The Son is the image of the invisible **God**, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were **created**: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created **through** him and **for** him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the **church**; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have **all his fullness** dwell in him, and through him to **reconcile** to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his **blood**, shed on the cross.*

8. Complete the following verses in John 6:26-33:

   *Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but **because you ate the loaves and had your fill**. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."*

   Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

   *Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: **to believe in the one he has sent**."*

   So they asked him, "What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

   *Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you **the true bread from heaven**. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."*

9. Picture yourself in this scene with Jesus on the mountainside. Write a short paragraph describing what you may have thought and felt as the scene unfolds.

The student is being asked to reflect on how they might have perceived what was happening as Jesus fed the 5000 and saw the responses of the people present. There isn't a correct answer. Possibly reflect on how you may have viewed the scene if you had been there.

Action Step

Choose one of the Gospels to read in its entirety in the next week. As you read, try to place yourself in each scene. How might you have felt? What would you have thought witnessing Jesus' ministry?

My Notes

LESSON 7: The Kingdom and the Cross

Complete the following verses from the New Testament about Jesus' place in the creation:

1. *Through **him** [Jesus, the Word] all things were made; without **him** nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:3)*

2. *For in **him** [The Son, Jesus] **all things were created**: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created **through him and for him**. He is before all things, and in him all things **hold together**. (Colossians 1:16-17)*

3. How would you explain, in light of the verses above, to someone who asked you, "Isn't Jesus just a man, not God like Christians say?"

   The Bible is clear that Jesus was not just a man. He created all things and all things were created through and for Him. He is God.

Complete the following verses from Genesis 3:14-15:

4. *So the LORD God said to the serpent,*
   "Because you have done this,
   "Cursed are you above all livestock
   and all wild animals!
   You will crawl on your belly
   and you will eat dust
   all the days of your life.
   And I will put enmity
   between you and the woman,
   and between your offspring and hers;
   *he will **crush your head**,*
   and you will strike his heel." (Genesis 3:14-15)

5. Genesis 49:10: Jesus would come from this Jewish tribe:

   The tribe of Judah

6. Isaiah 53:5: Because of our own rebelliousness and sin, the messiah would . . .

   Be pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities. We are healed by His wounds.

7. Zechariah 9:9: Jesus would enter Jerusalem this way to be crucified:

   See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Read **Exodus 12** and answer the following questions:

8. What were the people very specifically instructed to do? (Exodus 12:1-8)

   - **On the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household.**
   - **If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor.**
   - **Animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats.**
   - **Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight.**
   - **Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.**
   - **That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast.**
   - **Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it.**
   - **This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the LORD's Passover.**

9. What did God tell Moses and Aaron about the celebration of Passover in Exodus 12:14?

   To celebrate the Passover for generations to come.

10. What does the apostle Paul say about Jesus in 1 Corinthians 5:7?

    Christ is "our" Passover lamb that has been sacrificed.

11. What does 1 Peter 1:18-19 say about our redemption*?

    We have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

12. How long before the Passover celebration did Jesus arrive in Bethany on His way to Jerusalem? (John 12:1)

    Six days

13. What did Mary do at the home of His friend Lazarus in Bethany? (John 12:3)

    She poured perfume on Jesus' feet and wiped His feet with her hair.

14. What was Judas' reaction to what Mary had done? (John 12:4-6)

    He objected to what Mary had done, saying that the money for the perfume could have been given to the poor. But he was a thief, not really caring for poor people.

15. What did Jesus say to Judas? (John 12:7)

    Jesus told him to leave her alone because the perfume was meant to be saved for that day.

16. What did the crowds in Jerusalem do to prepare for Jesus' entry and welcome Him? (John 12:13)

    They took palm branches and went out to meet Him, shouting, "Hosanna" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the king of Israel!"

Read **Matthew 21:1-17** and answer the following questions:

17. What was the Old Testament prophecy that Jesus fulfilled in Matthew 21:1-5?

    "Your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

18. In Matthew 21:12-14 we read that Jesus chased out the money changers when He reached the Temple. What else did Jesus do in verse 21:14 of Matthew?

    Jesus healed the blind and lame.

19. Where did Jesus go after leaving the Temple? (Matthew 21:17)

    He went back to the town of Bethany.

20. What did Jesus say to Peter and the sons of Zebedee, James and John, in the garden in Matthew 26:38?

    "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

21. What did Jesus say to His Father in heaven as He prayed in the garden in Matthew 26:39?

    "If it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

22. Why do you think Jesus prayed this way?

    The student's answer should say something about Jesus being a man and understanding how painful and difficult the Cross would be.

23. In Matthew 26:54, what is the reason Jesus gave the disciples that they should not fight the crowd?

    "How then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

24. Have you ever had an experience where you were in a hopeless or dark spot in your life and told God you would continue to trust Him? Explain:

    Feelings of hopelessness or darkness are part of the human experience. The student is asked to reflect on how they trust God even when things seem hopeless.

25. Knowing Jesus' painful physical and spiritual battle on the Cross, and His proclamation that the debt for sin was paid in full, are you able to accept God's complete forgiveness in your own life? Why or why not?

    The student's response reflects their faith and trust in God's grace and forgiveness in their life. Affirm their answer or provide insight if they say that they are not able to fully accept God's forgiveness.

Action Step

Spend time this week reading and meditating on Psalm 22. As you do, consider Jesus on the Cross doing the same. Ask God to increase your faith. Read Psalm 22 again, out loud, or quietly, and direct the words of the Psalm to God as a prayer from your own heart.

LESSON 8: The Forever Kingdom

1. Do you ever struggle with believing that all of your sin has been forgiven and paid for by Jesus? Explain why or why not:

   The student should be providing the mentor with insight as to where or how they struggle with accepting God's grace and forgiveness. Respond accordingly.

Whom did Jesus appear to in each of the following verses from the four Gospels and Paul's 1st letter to the Corinthian church?

2.	Mark 16:9-11	**Mary Magdalene**
3.	Matthew 28:8-10	**Two Marys, Magdalene and another Mary**
4.	Mark 16:12-13	**Two disciples**
5.	Luke 24:33-34	**The eleven apostles / disciples**
6.	John 20:19-25	**The disciples**
7.	Mark 16:14	**The eleven apostles**
8.	John 21:1-14	**His disciples / apostles**
9.	Matthew 28:16-20	**His eleven apostles**
10.	1 Corinthians 15:6	**500 disciples**
11.	1 Corinthians 15:7	**James**

Read **Acts 2** and answer the following questions:

12. When the Holy Spirit filled the house where the disciples were gathered, they heard a sound that sounded like what? (Acts 4:4)

    It sounded like the blowing of a violent wind.

13. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began doing this: (Acts 4:4)

    Speaking in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

14. A crowd gathered, and instead of hearing strange tongues from the disciples, they heard this: (Acts 2:11)

    They heard them declaring the wonders of God in their own tongues (languages).

15. Some of the crowd made fun of what was happening and said this about the disciples: (Acts 2:13)

    That they must be drunk.

16. What does God tell Abraham in Genesis 12:3 about Abraham's offspring?

    "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

17. What does Isaiah 49:6 tell us about God's plan for the Gentiles?

    Salvation would be made available to all people throughout the world.

Read **Acts 10:24-48** and answer the following questions:

18. What does Peter tell Cornelius in verse 10:28 of Acts?

    He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean."

19. What did the "man in shining clothes" who appeared to Cornelius as he prayed tell him to do? (Verse 10:32)

    Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.

20. Peter tells those gathered at Cornelius' home that he now understood that God does not show favoritism, but accepts whom? (Verse 10:35)

    God *". . . accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right."*

21. What does Peter order to be done in verse 10:48 for the household of Cornelius?

    That they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Acts chapter 9 tells the miraculous story of Saul's conversion. Read **Acts 9:1-19** and answer the following questions:

22. What had Saul asked the high priest in verses 9:1-2?

    He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

23. In his travel to Damascus, a bright light surrounded Saul. When Saul asked who this great light was, a voice from heaven said what? (Acts 9:5)

    "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

24. What did God tell Ananias about Saul in Acts 9:15?

This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel.

Action Step

There is no higher calling for Christians than to worship God with a grateful heart for making a way for us to be part of His Kingdom. This week, set time aside each day to be with God, expressing to Him your gratefulness for His grace and mercy.

My Notes

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